



Shelby Soil and Water Conservation District

NOTE TO EDITORS: This is a joint release from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Shelby Soil and Water Conservation District.

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Contacts: Jessie Brown (DNR)
515-281-5131
David Brand (Prairie Rose Lake)
(712) 755-2417
Dustin Vande Hoef (Agriculture)
515-281-3375 or 515/326-1616 (cell)

PRAIRIE ROSE LAKE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT KICKS OFF

HARLAN – At an event Tuesday, the Shelby Soil and Water Conservation District introduced the Prairie Rose Lake Watershed Project, which will help locals improve the Shelby County lake.

The Prairie Rose Lake Watershed Project will receive a projected \$562,153 over three years in local, state and federal funding to help improve water quality in the lake. It is one of seven new watershed projects this summer that will receive a projected total of \$5.4 million in local, state and federal resources to address water quality issues over the next two to three years.

The project is a partnership between the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship – Division of Soil Conservation (IDALS), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Shelby Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

“I look forward to meeting with local landowners and residents and working with them to make Prairie Rose an even better place to swim, fish and go boating,” said David Brand, coordinator of the Prairie Rose Lake Watershed Project. “The improvements we make to the lake can have an impact on the community. With better water, swimming and fishing can improve, and hopefully tourism will follow.”

Additional improvements in the watershed, or the area of land that drains to the lake, will help protect future in-lake restoration investments. Those in-lake efforts will build upon water quality improvements, which can help the local economy. Prairie Rose Lake currently provides more than \$3.37 million of economic value to the area annually, according to a study by Iowa State University’s Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD).

The Prairie Rose Lake Watershed Project will work one-on-one with landowners to make changes in the watershed. Those changes can help keep excess sediment and nutrients out of the lake. Currently, excess sediment and nutrients cause problem algae growth, affecting recreation.

“With the changes we make on the land, we’re aiming to reduce the amount of sediment and phosphorus reaching the lake by 60 percent,” Brand said.

Brand and the watershed project will work one-on-one with local landowners to complete a comprehensive assessment of the watershed’s needs. The funds target the most critical needs and help landowners apply conservation measures.